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PRESS RELEASE

LEON to Observe Liberia's Presidential and Legislative Elections on October 10, 2023

Monrovia, Liberia: The Liberia Elections Observation Network (LEON)[1] announced that it will begin deploying teams of observers and coordinators on October 9 to all 15 counties and 73 electoral districts to observe the presidential and legislative elections on October 10, 2023.

LEON is deploying 904 short-term observers (STOs) and 53 Field Coordinators who will join a core team of 73 long-term observers (LTOs) who are currently deployed in all electoral districts. Together, they will observe election day related activities. STOs will be deployed to observe and report on electoral proceedings at selected polling precincts. They will observe the opening and closing of polling places; monitor the process of voting by registered voters; and assess adherence to voter identification, inking, and ballot issuing procedures. Observers will also note and report on any security issues or incidents that may take place on Election Day.

Speaking ahead of the deployment, LEON's Head of Secretariat, Augustine S. M. Tamba, said: "LTOs have been deployed in all electoral districts for more than one year, which has enabled LEON's assessment of the pre-election environment around the country and observation of electoral administration preparations." He noted that Liberia's checkered electoral history requires local civil society organizations like LEON to adopt an important mandate for providing nonpartisan citizen observation to build confidence in the electoral process. LEON believes that observers' presence at polling precincts and places can deter violence; encourage free, fair, transparent, and inclusive elections; and hold the National Elections Commission (NEC) accountable for delivering genuine and credible elections.

Electoral process findings from neutral citizen observers will help inform LEON's Election Day and post-Election Day statements and reports. LEON expects to release a Situational Statement on the opening of polls by midday on October 10th and a Close of Polls Statement on the evening of October 10th. A Preliminary Statement on the conduct of polling and counting will be released by Thursday, October 12, 2023. A Final Report will be issued at the conclusion of the electoral cycle.

Since 2017, LEON has observed every election in Liberia, including the presidential election, senatorial and representative elections, and by-elections. Findings from electoral process observation enabled LEON to issue actionable recommendations on increasing public participation during elections, mainstreaming gender during elections, mitigating challenges to the final registration roll, and resolving electoral disputes during review and reform of the electoral law.

Campaign:

LEON condemns in the strongest terms the acts of provocation and incidences of electoral violence noted during the campaign process that resulted in the loss of lives and destruction of properties in Montserrado, Lofa, Cape Mount, and Nimba counties.

LEON calls on all Liberian to remain peaceful and avoid any act of violence during the end of the campaign and post-election result pronouncement. LEON calls on all political parties, candidates,

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[1] LEON is a network of the Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY); the National Union of Organizations of the Disable; the Liberia Crusaders for Peace (LCP); and the Justice and Peace Commission (JPC). Since 2017, LEON has developed into one of Liberia's primary and most respected organizations operating in the democracy and governance space and has successfully conducted a range of activity including legislative monitoring, and reporting on violence against women in politics, and advocating for election reform.

agents, and supporters, as well as other stakeholders, to maintain peaceful elections so that the citizens of Liberia can safely select their leaders!

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